

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION
DECEMBER 29, 2005**

PRESENT: Commissioners John M. Hyk (Chairman), Charles G. Boetsch and Amy R. Fowler. Also present were Technology Consultant James Arseneau, Sheriff Scott Story, Communications Director Owen Smith and County Clerk Barbara Arseneau.

TECHNOLOGY DECISIONS FOR 2006:

James Arseneau of J&B Diversified Associates, Inc. submitted a plan for 2006 technology expenditures to the County Commissioners. This plan enables the County to make necessary purchases while remaining under the \$205,000.00 limit set by the Waldo County Budget Committee during the Public Hearing and final Budget Committee meeting on December 14, 2005.

On the left side of the page, J. Arseneau's list showed what had been requested prior to the budget cut, and the right column showed what actually would be requested for 2006. He detailed the items and answered questions for the Commissioners. Some purchases had been done in 2005, so they would not need to be requested from the 2006 budget. J. Arseneau also provided a cost projection for the lease-to-purchase for the CAD (Computer Assisted Dispatch) system for the years 2006-2013. The projections also included other Technology ongoing purchases and upgrades through 2013, allowing for a 3% inflationary cost factor. J. Arseneau explained that the lease was a municipal one, designed for those entities that cannot encumber themselves beyond one year. This lease also can be prepaid without penalty, similar to a mortgage. The recommendation for the CAD system was Spillman.

J. Arseneau further requested, in order to complete the purchases that were necessary for 2006, that the Commissioners authorize a few isolated expenditures from the Technology Reserve in the amount of approximately \$40,000.00 total.

O. Smith commented that he had been involved with Spillman representatives for getting the prices reduced to the point that the County could afford it with the reduction in budget. No payments on the lease would be required until August of 2006. This way, the County would not have to borrow from the tax anticipation note immediately, which reduces the interest payments in that regard. He reported that Spillman gave a "substantial discount" and that the County "has a very favorable price on a very good system." J. Arseneau further explained that the pricing given the County was actually 2004 prices and these prices would hold as long as the Commissioners signed the lease agreement before the end of 2005.

J. Arseneau explained that the maintenance cost is fixed for the entire lease period. The interest would be a little over \$100,000.00 over the life of the lease. The County will be saving about \$30,000.00 in the lease maintenance, so the net interest will actually be about \$66,000.00.

S. Story said he was "tickled" looking at this plan. He commented that J. Arseneau had "sucked it up" and made things work not just this year, but forward into the future. He congratulated J. Arseneau for "doing exactly what the Budget Committee was looking for. The Commissioners also commended J. Arseneau for his efforts in finding workable solutions for Technology purchasing for 2006 with the reduced budget and for planning ahead for the future. J. Hyk cautioned, "The best laid plans go awry," but added that he was "encouraged" that the Technology expenditures and goals had been planned so far ahead.

Commissioner Boetsch inquired about leasing and paying early or extending the lease. J. Arseneau expressed concern that it could affect the maintenance cost.

J. Hyk then brought up the subject of the current CSH CAD system. He stated that he was “uncomfortable sailing along with the one we’ve got.” S. Story informed the Commissioners that he and Owen Smith had met with CSH yesterday. He said that this was a good meeting and that he and Owen had expressed their dissatisfaction with the unfulfilled promises of upgrades. They also expressed concern over the slow response time when there were issues.

S. Story talked about how Belfast City Manager Terry St. Peter had stated in the Public Hearing on December 14, 2005 that CSH had stated that there would be an upgrade within the first to weeks of January. CSH told them yesterday that this was very unlikely. O. Smith confirmed that CSH had said that it might not occur until sometime later in the first quarter of the year.

There was brief discussion of the \$40,000.00 that needs to be utilized from the Technology Reserve. J. Hyk talked about the fact that the Commissioners had not been able to fund this as fully as was recommended but there were circumstances that had prevented this including an expensive fuel tank that had to be removed, Maine State Retirement debt that had to be paid, a “fabulous piece of land” that came along and was a good deal to purchase.

J. Arseneau explained the CAD system is two pieces – law enforcement and the public safety component and items and equipment for other departments. It’s good for all departments, so it is in keeping with the designed function of the Technology operating budget and reserve account. This software will allow Lincolnville and Searsport to link up. Costs involved with this linking were briefly discussed. J. Hyk felt that it was a bad precedent to consider charging the towns that wished to link with the County. Further discussion revealed the general view that other than funding through property taxes, no additional charges would be paid by those towns who decided to link with the County except the components on the town’s end that would need to be purchased in order to complete the link. Those matters would be discussed in more detail at a later date. J. Hyk felt that if the County attempted to charge the towns to utilize the link, “For \$20,000.00 of expense, there would be \$100,000.00 worth of political headaches.”

S. Story expressed his hope that these towns will come to the budget hearing next year to support any additional request that may be necessary in order to bring their town on board.

In summary, all present felt the Technology plans for 2006 through 2013 made sense and the break down and planning appeared to be well thought out. The Commissioners thanked J. Arseneau for all his continued work for the County. They suggested that the break down as presented be sent with a letter of explanation to the Budget Committee so that they would be able to know how the Technology expenditures were going to be handled. It was further suggested that it be sent out to the FY 2007 Budget Committee in the fall of 2006 as well.

J. Arseneau requested the Commissioners’ signatures on the contract. He mentioned that if, for some unforeseen reason the lease had to be extended beyond the seven years, the only thing that would change is the maintenance cost.

****A. Fowler moved, G. Boetsch seconded accepting the terms J. Arseneau had negotiated with Spillman for a lease for \$503,943.00. Unanimous.**

TAX CAP FOR 2006:

The County Commissioners stated that they wished for their formal vote on the tax cap to be identical to that of the Budget Committee on December 14, 2005. B. Arseneau furnished the wording from the minutes from that meeting. The Commissioners voted as follows:

****A. Fowler moved, G. Boetsch seconded to increase, if necessary, the tax cap if needed. Unanimous.**

CORRESPONDENCE:

Present with the Commissioners was County Clerk Barbara Arseneau. The Correspondence to the Commissioners was as follows:

1. The Commissioners noted that they had voted to authorize the hire of Dale Rowley of Thorndike as Emergency Management Agency Director effective January 9, 2006 at a starting salary of \$38,000.00, which would increase to \$40,000.00 by the end of 2006 upon successful completion of six (6) months. Mr. Rowley had agreed to this in lieu of health insurance benefits.

2. The former part-time EMA Clerk position had been restructured and was now a full time EMA Administrative Secretary position, which would be Classification IV, starting pay of \$12.77 per hour on the pay scale as suggested by Interim County EMA Director Jethro Pease.

****G. Boetsch moved, A. Fowler seconded the creation of the EMA Administrative Secretary position at Classification IV on the County Pay Scale. Unanimous.**

3. B. Arseneau had been told by a member of the interviewing committee that former Dispatcher Olga Rumney has accepted the position of EMA Administrative Secretary at the Class IV starting pay per hour, effective January 3, 2006.

****A. Fowler moved, G. Boetsch seconded hiring Olga Rumney as EMA Administrative Secretary at the starting pay of \$12.77 per hour in the Classification IV of the pay scale, effective January 3, 2006. Unanimous.**

4. When asked, all the Commissioners declined an invitation to attend the Maine Sheriff's Association Annual meeting in January.

5. The following pay step increases were noted:

- Sgt. James Porter would receive an increase from \$17.96 to \$18.23 effective January 1, 2006 for his sixteen-year step.
- Deputy James Greeley received a pay increase from \$14.15 to \$14.48 per hour effective December 16, 2005 because he graduated from the Maine Criminal Justice Academy that date.
- Registry of Deeds Clerk Debbie Berry will reach her one-year pay increase to \$12.11 per hour on January 2, 2006.

6. Sheriff Scott Story submitted a signed copy of the Volunteers of America Contract for 2006.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS:

Commissioner Boetsch informed the other two Commissioners that he had been looking at space issues in the Superior Courthouse and had discovered three vacant rooms on the upper level that might be used for Archival space. He stated that he would like Architect Robert Fenney to look at the space to determine if it

were appropriate or not. J. Hyk requested that Archivist Cheryl Coats also be included in viewing this space, as her expertise and knowledge would be crucial to determine whether this was appropriate records space or not. G. Boetsch stated his goal of putting records that would seldom be accessed in there, particularly confidential records.

TREASURERS REPORT:

Present for this discussion was Treasurer David A. Parkman, who reported that the Tax Anticipation Note would be handled on January 10, 2006 in the County Commissioners Court Session.

REVENUES:

D. Parkman reported that the revenues had exceeded expectation by 10% at this point in the year. There may be more interest garnered by the end of December.

APPROPRIATIONS:

Inmate boarding costs had been lower than expected in 2005. Currently there was a balance of \$137,000.00 and there would be payment of an additional \$60,000.00 to \$70,000.00 for the end of December. This would hopefully put the County's budget "in the black" on that line item.

J. Hyk inquired about when the total surplus would be known. D. Parkman thought it would be sometime after the next warrant, which would be the last bills for 2005. B. Arseneau and Deputy Treasurer Karen Ward stated that, historically, that figure is not really known until it was cleared by the auditor sometime in February or March and the Mil Rate was set.

It was noted that no Contingency funding was utilized during 2005, which was the first time in numerous years.

There was brief discussion of Knox County's lawsuit prior to the warning that they should cease their illegal strip searches being covered by all Counties' via insurance.

D. Parkman stated that traditionally the County takes the Bank with the lowest bid and moves all it's accounts to that bank. He had consulted with the other Maine counties and many keep their accounts with the same bank regardless of which bank was awarded the T.A.N bid. Those counties keep their accounts with one bank and to out to bid for the TAN note only. Occasionally, "shopping around" would be a good idea in order to obtain the best services.

***G. Boetsh moved, A. Fowler seconded adjourning the meeting at 10:33 a.m. Unanimous.**

The next Waldo County Commissioners Court Session will be December 14, 2005 at 3:45 p.m. to interview candidates for the Emergency Management Agency Director position.

The first County Commissioners Court Session in 2006 will be January 10, 2006.

****G. Boetsch moved, A. Fowler seconded adjourning the meeting at 11:35 p.m. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted by Barbara L. Arseneau
Waldo County Clerk